

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

by the Reverend
ALBERT SWIFT

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

by the Reverend
G. Campbell Morgan D.D

First published in 1908



Albert Swift (left) and G Campbell Morgan in 1907.

This edition of 'The First Principles of Christian Citizenship' by Albert Swift produced by Philip Evans

All Souls Community Centre & Church, 141 Cleveland Street, London W1T 6QG

Contact Philip by e-mail at: philipevans@clubhousew1.org

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PREFACE TO THE 2013 EDITION

ALBERT SWIFT is the forgotten Minister of Westminster Chapel in London. Looking back, people tend to think he was G Campbell Morgan's associate or assistant but Swift was co-Minister with Morgan. Today, Morgan is much more widely known than Swift, partly because he survived his friend by almost 30 years but mainly because he was a preacher and teacher who left behind an impressive library of books, whereas Swift's passion and talent for social action was something that many Christians were happy to forget.

Reviewing the book in 1908, J Ossian Davies wrote, 'This is a real book for the times, and its dominant theme will not allow itself to be ignored until millionaires and paupers are equally scarce upon the earth'. But the book seems to have been quickly forgotten. After it was republished in 1953, the copy at the Evangelical Library was read by only three people. I am the third. Before me was Dr Charles James, my predecessor as the archivist at Westminster Chapel, who recommended it to me. The first was the theologian and historian, Harold H Rowden, in 1977, who later published an article on Swift and his book in *Vox Evangelica* (1985).

Dr Rowden's article has the provocative title, *Albert Swift: A Social Gospeller at Westminster Chapel?* The 'social gospel' was typically associated with the belief that Christ would not return until human effort had rid the world of social evil and it was, therefore, inconsistent with mainstream evangelicalism. Dr Rowden concludes that Swift was influenced by the more moderate of the social gospel advocates, like Josiah Strong, but he both made their ideas even more moderate and enriched them with his Biblical understanding.

My view is that Swift and Morgan shared an understanding of the Kingdom of God that informed every aspect of their theology and practice, so that social action is no more separate from spiritual activities like worship and prayer or to evangelism than the two sides of a coin. Swift fleshed out his ideas of what social action might involve with the aid of people like Josiah Strong.

Modern readers should not be put off by Swift's references to socialism and communism because he had in mind ideology as it was flourishing at the dawn of the Twentieth Century, not the political movements that evolved later. Crucially, neither Swift nor Morgan placed any hope for the Kingdom of God in political allegiance or

action, as the latter makes clear in his Introduction. It follows that the final chapter, Swift's analysis of 'present day movements', needs to be read with the historical context in mind.

Dr Rowden's article is enormously helpful and explains more about Swift, Morgan and Strong. It has been made available on the internet by The London School of Theology and can be found at:

http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/vox/vol15/swift_rowdon.pdf

This edition of Swift's book has been only lightly edited, to update some obsolete punctuation, replace Roman numerals and to correct what I am sure were a couple of minor errors in the manuscript that I worked from. I have also added a few footnotes, that I hope are helpful. It is likely that some errors remain, and that I may have created some more of my own, so please let me know of anything that should be corrected.

Philip Evans
All Souls Clubhouse Community Centre & Church
December 2013

INTRODUCTION TO THE 1908 EDITION

THE author's right to deal with the subjects he approaches in this book is that first of vision. For many years he has seen through the almost tragic conditions obtaining even in the most advanced countries, to a better order in the purpose and power of God. This right, however, is immeasurably strengthened by the fact that he has not indulged in hasty speech, or attempted to interpret to others what he has not carefully considered. A definite course of study in Sociology suggested by one of its most able exponents, long years of patient observation of the movements of the living times, active co-operation on both sides of the Atlantic in those activities which aim at relieving wrong conditions, combined with a reverent study of the teachings of the Bible, have prepared him for the writing of this book. He might have written a much more lengthy and pretentious volume, but wisely has confined himself at the moment to such a simple statement as can be easily read and understood by the wayfaring man.

The first value of this book is that in dealing with these themes the author never forgets that the Kingdom of God is the true and only description of perfect human conditions. He has ceased, in common with all those who are familiar with human nature, to put his trust in princes, whether of birth, or of political parties, or of philosophic speculation. Yet he has the greatest confidence in human nature when truly related to the Throne of God.

Beyond that it is valuable supremely in that it neither makes the mistake of attempting to produce a harvest without a sowing, nor of generating steam which is only to be used in whistling. The diagram of concentric circles is in itself a plan and a programme*.

In his statement of principles the author quotes from the writing of Peter, showing how God has made a provision for all life and godliness, and that our responsibility is that of giving all diligence to the working out of the provision of God into the experiences of life. To read a little further in that identical passage in Peter, is to reach the most caustic criticism of the attitude of Christian men all too often, "He that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near." An examination of what the apostle refers to as "these things," will show them to be the things of the Kingdom of God, the

*See page 36 (PE)

things of His provision wrought out into actual experience. We lack them because we have become near-sighted. And yet again the apostle adds, “having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins,” which is to say that carelessness about, the widest application of Christian principles is due to an enfeebled sense of the first gift of cleansing from personal sins.

I am thankfully, and in view of their message perhaps a little boastfully, inclined to take responsibility for the publication of the papers comprising this booklet. They were first given to the members of the Westminster Staff nearly two years ago, and then produced so profound an impression on all of us, that I besought the author to put them into a more permanent form, in order to give them wider circulation. It has taken all my persuasive powers—and with this man they are not inconsiderable—to produce the result. At last I have succeeded, and am glad, because I believe the simplicity and lucidity of the statement of Christian responsibility which these chapters make, will be of real value to many who are honestly inquiring the nature of Christian relationship to the questions of the hour.

That this book will fling the horizon further back for many is my hope and prayer.

G Campbell Morgan
Westminster Chapel

THE NEED FOR DIRECTION

“To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.” — Isaiah 8. 20

“God is not dumb, that He should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor.”

James Russell Lowell

THE NEED FOR DIRECTION

HAS the Christian any responsibility as a citizen? This question is fundamental.

If not, one of two things should happen. Either he should be taken out of the world, with the life of which he has absolutely nothing to do, or he should belong to a people entirely segregated, forming independent colonies, if not nations. It is inconceivable that the Christian should partake of the profits of the world's life, and bear no part of its responsibilities.

If, on the other hand, he is called upon to bear such responsibilities, it cannot be that Christ has left him entirely without direction as to their fulfilment. There may be no trace of political programmes in the Word of God, but at least it should be possible to find the principles which must govern his relation to all the public propaganda of his time.

That Christianity has been a great purifying and uplifting force in the social and political life of the world cannot be denied. The high-water mark of national progress is to be found in those lands where the Christian ideal has been most largely realised.

The source of many of the great movements which have issued in social betterment can be definitely traced back to Christian inspiration and influence. If government has not always been in the hands of distinctively Christian men, the pressure of Christian influence has again and again compelled the redress of wrong, and the establishing of higher standards of social righteousness.

Of course it follows—if the Christian has no responsibility as a citizen—that all this activity and influence has been mistaken, and, in so far as it is contrary to the intention and will of God, positively wrong. If, on the other hand, the responsibility is acknowledged, it is impossible to escape the conviction that much more might have been wrought if the Christian influence had been a unit, dominated by a conscious conviction of the Will of God.

It is obvious to all the world that Christian people are very far from agreement in the matter of social activity. It is one of the saddest features of our modern Church life that political propaganda so often results in strife within its borders. Everyone will admit that Christ is not divided. He does not contradict Himself, nor set His followers in

opposing camps. If He calls His people to social activity, He must have a plan to which they should all conform.

There appear to be at least three fruitful sources of division in this matter:

(i) *Action that is born of intuition rather than reasoned conviction.* Probably thousands of enfranchised Christians cast their vote without any consciousness of being guided by the principles of Christ. They believe that they are right, but are unable to give a reason for the faith that is in them. The absence of such principles issues in the great danger of action being determined by personal interest. Even when the intuition is right, the Christian citizen's power would be greatly enhanced were he governed not by his feelings and impulses, but by the fixed principles of his reigning Lord.

(2) *The habit of depending upon human judgment instead of Divine guidance.* To all intents and purposes a great many Christian people exile Christ from their political life. The question with them is, what they think, not what He wills. It is a commonplace to hear the claim, "I have a right to my own opinion." If they belong to Christ, no such right exists. The only responsibility is that of discovering His will, that it may govern all the life.

(3) *The absence of any conception of social destiny.* Very many, the disinterestedness of whose service cannot be challenged, limit their own usefulness by allowing themselves to become mere opportunists. Their vision is consequently narrow and contracted. It lacks that broad outlook upon the movements of God which sees the goal, and gives a true sense of proportion and direction.

It is certain that, if the Christian is also a citizen, called to act in this sphere as in all others for the glory of God and the good of man, his activities need to be brought into closer and more definite relation to Jesus Christ as Lord and King. His banner needs to become the rallying point of all who are called by His name. His purpose and programme need to be more clearly understood, and all such enterprise needs to be taken up under His direct command.

In other words, we need a fuller understanding of the first principles of Christian citizenship. Three questions meet us at the very threshold of such

study—Why? Whither? How? The answer to the first will indicate the Sanctions of Christian Citizenship; to the second, The Goal of Christian Citizenship; and to the third, The Method of Christian Citizenship. If these answers can be found in the Revelation of God, they should prove to be guiding principles, in the light of which all political enterprise can be judged. This little book is the result of the writer's quest for such first principles. It is an unpretentious volume. The work was not undertaken with any thought of its appearing in print. Friends, however, have urged publication, and if it serves to give clearer vision to any who are groping amid the darkened maze of modern politics, the writer will be repaid.

THE FIRST QUESTION: WHY?

THE SANCTIONS OF CHRISTIANS CITIZENSHIP

THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN

THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST

THE PRINCIPLE STATED:

**THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST INCLUDES THE REALISATION IN THIS WORLD OF THE PERFECT
SOCIAL ORDER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

“Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” — Matthew 4.17

“To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” — 1 John 3.8

“Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God ... that God may be all and in all.” — 1 Corinthians 12.24 & 28

“One God, one law, one element,
And one far off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.”

Lord Tennyson

THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST

IN seeking to comprehend the work of Christ, it is necessary to see it from the Divine standpoint, and to keep in view not simply the individual and today, but mankind and the ages. There is a spaciousness about it which baffles the thought of the average man. Faber has truly sung:

“The love of God is broader,
Than the measures of man’s mind.”

It is so wonderful in its purpose, and so imperial in its sphere, that men have seemed incapable of seeing more than a part thereof. Unhappily, they have often foolishly declared that the bounds of God’s activity are set at the limits of their horizon.

Some have gazed upon the Saviour of sinners, have heard His call, through faith in Him they have been reconciled to God, and born anew of the Spirit. Blessed work! But they have made the mistake of regarding this work as final, when it is really initial. To be saved from sin and its consequences, to know Him, and finally to be with Him in Heaven—these mark the boundaries of their conception of His purpose.

Others have discovered in Him the ideal teacher. In His precepts they have found the promise of a better and a brighter age, and they believe that if only His ethic can be enforced, a new era will have dawned, and the world’s wounds will be healed. But, again there has often been a narrowed outlook. They have failed to realise that all this in issue, is dependent upon the dynamic of regenerate life.

Men are very apt to grasp one important truth. It appeals to their conscience, and meets the particular need of their life. With them it becomes the supreme, and presently—perhaps almost unconsciously—the only truth. It issues in the very prevalent habit of regarding things which are secondary in importance as unimportant. This seems to have been the attitude of the lawyer who came to Christ with the question, “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? And He said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two

commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets.”¹ The lawyer did not ask about the second, and the very fact that Christ went on to speak of it implies the incompleteness of the outlook which prompted the question. The Master evidently intended to teach him that whilst the second commandment is second and not first, it is still of like importance, and may not be neglected or set aside. The two things are united in the thought of God; and what God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

The initial need in any study of this subject is a frank recognition of the spaciousness of the purpose of Christ. It includes many things. The Scriptures must be studied with a view to discovering the Divine purpose throughout. The outlook must be a wide one. When brought into relation with the whole of the great enterprise of God in Redemption, isolated sayings—of obscure meaning when treated alone—flame with light and beauty, and reveal the precious truths they contain.

The boundaries of the Bible stories are: At the beginning, the Garden of God², where in sylvan simplicity a perfect social order obtained, man and woman realising an absolutely true relation under the immediate government of God. At the end, the City of God—“New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,”³—a graphic description of the “new earth” in which God reigns, and the human ideal has become a fact. The last word of prophecy concerning the work of Christ seems to be expressed in the passage, “Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God.”⁴ The Kingdom when fully and finally established is to be handed over to God the Father, “that God may be all in all.”⁵ This statement of purpose achieved suggests that Jesus Christ is subduing a rebellious world, and bringing it back to the authority and government of God; that by His redemptive work He is restoring an order which was broken up when the government of God was flung aside. Between these bounds lies the story of sin and redemption, and the latter is seen to have accomplished all its purpose when the ruin of the former is undone, and God’s perfect government is once more established among men.

¹Matthew 22:36-40 ²Genesis 2.8-25 ³Revelation 11.2 ⁴1 Corinthians 15.24 ⁵1 Corinthians 15.28

One of the most comprehensive and concise statements concerning the purpose of Christ to be found in the whole of the Scriptures is that of the Apostle John. "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."¹ The question at once arises, What are the works of the devil? At first the multitude of the works of evil seems to be so bewildering as to make a complete answer almost impossible. A closer examination, however, makes it very evident that all this fruitage of sin has its roots in two initial facts. The story in the early chapters of Genesis reveals the devil accomplishing two things: first, the separation of man from his Maker; and, second, the separation of man from his brother man. His mission is ever that of disintegration. The Divine ideal is, that man should live in obedience to and fellowship with God, and consequently realise the Divine order in all his intercourse with his fellows. The first relationship was ruptured, and the second also, for the simple reason that it was dependent upon the first. All wrong, marks failure either in relationship to God or to man.

The twofold demand of the law reveals most clearly this twofold work of the devil. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."² Love always issues in obedience and loyalty. There can be no love to God which does not recognise His right to rule, and the eternal beneficence of His way. If, then, the first great commandment is truly kept, the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," will be also, for all the interrelation of men will then be governed by the fixed principles of the first—obedience to the Will of God.

The enemy, with subtle cunning, has, from the beginning, cut at the roots and undermined the foundations of righteousness. When Jesus Christ undertook "to destroy the works of the devil," we may be sure that His purpose was to go to the root of the matter, to set things right at the foundations. It will thus be seen that the work of Christ, stated in its simplest terms, is twofold: He aims at a restoration of man to a right relation to God, and consequently to his fellow-man.

The key to this whole outlook upon the work of Christ lies in a right understanding of what He meant by the Kingdom of God.

¹1 John 3.8 ²Matthew 12.37

This was the great theme of His ministry. At the very threshold of His work we read that “From that time began Jesus to preach and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”¹ The Gospels are full of His great pronouncements concerning it. The Kingdom was the dominant note.

He taught His disciples to give the Kingdom the first place in all their prayer. When instructing them upon the subject He said: “After this manner, therefore, pray ye:

“Our Father which art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
As in heaven, so on earth.”²

The three petitions are essentially one, and are luminous in their interpretation of what Christ meant by the Kingdom of Heaven. In effect, He said: In Heaven our Father’s name is hallowed, His kingship is unquestioned; His Will is unchallenged and commands immediate and absolute obedience. So pray that these things may obtain on earth; that His Kingdom may be as real here as there.

What, then, did Christ mean when He preached the Kingdom of God, and taught His disciples to pray for its consummation? There is much apprehension in the minds of Christian people upon this subject, and it is very necessary that His objective should be clearly perceived. It may be well to state the case on its negative as well as its positive side.

The Kingdom of God does not mean the invisible Heaven which becomes the home of departed saints. A few moments of consideration should make this perfectly clear. The whole point of the prayer to which we have referred is, that the perfect order of that Heaven may be realised upon earth. The teaching of Christ, especially in the great parables of the Kingdom, is all descriptive of various aspects of the progress of the Kingdom during this age, in this world.

Of the great vision of consummation John says: “I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle

¹Matthew 4.17 ²Matthew 6.9-10

of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God... Behold, I make all things new.”¹

There is the realisation of that which Christ came to proclaim, and by His work make possible. There is the perfect answer to the prayer He taught His disciples to utter. The campaign of the Christ is initiated in the Gospels, and has its glorious and triumphant end in the Apocalypse. The aim and intention throughout is the realisation of God’s Kingdom upon earth.

Nor is the Kingdom of God synonymous with the Church. This mistake can only arise from loose and careless thinking. Unfortunately, however, it has often been made, and, as a result, has wrought paralysis within the Church itself. “The Kingdom belongs to Christ; and that is the supreme end, to which the Church is only a means.”² The individual Church is intended to be a base of operations, a centre of influence and activity, the aim and purpose of which is the realisation of the Kingdom of God. When that object is lost to view, and the Church becomes self-centred, paralysis has begun.

The Jewish conception of the Kingdom was not so much wrong as to essential facts, as in its thought of the methods by which it would be set up. The old Hebrew economy was a theocracy—a people living under the immediate government of God. The Divine intention was that it should be a witness to the world of the blessedness of a people thus governed. But the Divine purpose was rejected. The people clamoured for a King, that they might be like other nations. The ways of the world so filled their vision that when Christ came to proclaim His Kingdom, they could only think of a conquering King, who would win his triumph according to the methods “of this world.” Their obscured vision led to their rejection of the promised King.

We see, then, that the Kingdom of God—in Christ’s meaning of the words —is, in its ultimate issue, a perfected world, the government of which centres in the Throne of God; Man living in obedience to God, and consequently realising the Divine ideal in all human and social relationships. This conclusion leads to the statement of our first principle, namely—“The purpose of Christ includes the realisation in this world of the perfect social order of the Kingdom of God.”

¹Revelation 11.2-5 ²Dr. Josiah Strong

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN

THE PRINCIPLE STATED:

THE CHRISTIAN IS CALLED TO COOPERATE WITH CHRIST IN ALL HIS WORK

“Seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” — Matthew 5.33

“Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world.”

— Matthew 5.13-14

“As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.” — John 20.21

“If any man would ‘come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” — Luke 9.23

“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you.” — John 13.34

“One sole God;
One sole ruler—His Law
One sole interpreter of that law—Humanity.”

Joseph Mazzini

“Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.”

Abraham Lincoln

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN

CO-OPERATION! Surely that word indicates our whole responsibility. It bears thinking about, however. It means working together with, and not undertaking to do for. So much Christian energy is wasted because people undertake enterprises which, though born of the best of intentions, are altogether apart from the plan and programme of Christ.

It implies that Jesus Christ is still at work in the world. It is surely a false conception which thinks of Him as absent, and neglectful of the world for which He died, and over which He is yet to reign as King. The Gospel of Matthew—which is essentially the gospel of the Kingdom — concludes with the great commission to go and “make disciples of all the nations,” and the glorious promise: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the consummation of the age.” Yes, Christ is still in His world and at work—and all His work moves forever forward toward the goal of His patient endeavour.

If, then, His followers are to co-operate, they must necessarily keep in touch with Him, and know what He is doing in their age, and in what particulars He would have them share in His toil. This means that they must constantly exercise that communion with Him which is of the heart, and also closely study His work in the world, which calls for the application of the utmost powers of the mind.

But why co-operate at all? Why not leave the work entirely to Christ? The nature of the responsibility has been indicated, but it is still necessary to show why the responsibility exists.

Such service is the natural corollary of recognition of the Lordship of Christ. The servant is ever committed to the enterprises of his Lord. Christians are Christ’s men. His possessions are always unto purpose. He “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works.”¹ If Christ is Lord, and we are His people, then we are committed to His enterprises, and He looks to us to enter zealously into the realisation of all the things upon which His own heart is set. All this, however, must be under His immediate authority, and by the use of methods which He approves.

¹Titus 2. 14

This recognition of the Lordship of Christ as a fact (and not a mere doctrinal theory), and the identification of the Christian with Him in the working out of His purposes, means that the Christian will endeavour to see all things from Christ's point of view, and will seek the interests of his King rather than his own, or those of any class to which he may belong.

Moreover, Jesus Christ has distinctly called His disciples to such work. Call to mind a few of His great utterances: "Seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."¹ The whole content of that great word has often been narrowed down to the thought that if we live for Heaven, God will take care of us upon earth. That may be true, but it surely was not the point that Christ desired to enforce. He had been speaking of "laying up treasure," and of material needs. All His teaching went to show that in the Kingdom of God—i.e. where His will is obeyed—there is perfect provision for every need. The birds are fed, the lilies are clothed, and man's lack and consequent scheming to provide for himself grows out of the fact that he has departed from the government of God. Hence the disciple is commanded not to lay up treasure for himself, not to give all his attention to the meeting of his own needs, but rather to seek God's Kingdom in which all need will be met. There will be no problem either of poverty or wealth in the Kingdom of God—and the way to that glad and golden age must for evermore be the quest of the disciple of Christ.

"Ye are the salt of the earth... Ye are the light of the world."² Here is a very definite social commission. The disciple is to be in the world as salt and light. Salt is a septic, arresting the spread of corruption, and making the body smart in its application. Light is revealing, making plain the present imperfection, and indicating the higher requirement of God. And all this in every avenue of life. Christ set no bounds to the operation of this influence. He did not exclude social and political life. Wherever there is corruption, wherever there are wounds and festering sores, evils, the contagion of which threaten man in any place, the Christian's influence is to be as salt, staying its spread, and making the body politic smart in its consciousness of disease. Moreover, it is to be light—revealing in clear and definite outline the thing that is wrong, and as plainly indicating the better thing to which God is calling mankind. In all the centuries there have been individual Christians who have exercised his twofold influence, but it can hardly be said

¹Matthew 6.33 ²Matthew 5.13-14

that the great company of Christians has more than begun to realise its responsibility in the wider activities of the Kingdom of God.

“I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.”¹

“The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.”²

“A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord.”³

“As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.”⁴

“Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me.”⁵

These verses serve to focus our attention upon a thought that runs through all the teaching of Christ—that the first law of Christian life is service. The word is common enough among us, but how have we twisted and distorted its meaning! It has been very largely merged and lost in the idea of worship. Worship is one thing; service is another—and nothing is more clear in the teaching of the New Testament than that our service for Christ is to find its expression in service for our fellows.

Indeed, this conception should condition the whole of the Christian life. We do not realise the Christian ideal by giving twenty hours of the day to the service of self, and four to the service of others. The motive underlying all the activities of our complex life should be that of service. The Christian working man should not labour simply for a wage, but rather that he may contribute to the world's weal. The businessman whose life is governed by Christ's law will not serve in order to make his own fortune, but rather to further the well-being of his fellow men. And the Christian citizen, who would act upon the impulses that determined the conduct of his Lord, will not simply vote to conserve the interests of his class, or to save his own pocket in rates and taxes, but rather to right all wrong, and uplift humanity in so far as legislation and administration can. Here is a large sphere for Christian service—where truly “the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few.”

“If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”⁶ Dr. Josiah Strong, to whom I am indebted for the inspiration of

¹Luke 12.27 ²Matthew 20.28 ³Matthew 10.24 ⁴John 20.2 ⁵Matthew 25.40 ⁶Luke 9.23

this chapter, says: "It is one thing for a man to *deny* himself, and a very different thing for a man to deny *himself*. No one wins success of any sort without some measure of self-denial. The champion of the prize-ring has denied himself many things; and has sacrificed his intellectual and spiritual growth to his physical development. But this is not Christian self-sacrifice. Nor is the sacrifice of every natural inclination and the crucifixion of every noble desire in order to acquire wealth any more Christian. Again, a man may sacrifice body and soul to gratify his passion for knowledge or art. He is not so mean as the miser, nor so low as the prize-fighter, but his self-denial is no more Christian than theirs. In each case, one part of the man has been denied for the sake of another part. He has not denied himself, but only a fraction of himself. It is self-abnegation of which Christ is speaking. It is the death of self-will which He demands. Only when self-will is surrendered is sin surrendered, for self-will is the very essence of sin. A man may give up many sins without giving up sin. The former is reformation; the latter is conversion. Giving up sins means new habits; giving up sin means a new life.

"It is the will which determines character. The will is the essential man; so that the surrender of the will is the surrender of self, and nothing else is. A man may give his millions without giving himself. But

‘The gift without the giver is bare.’”¹

In no sphere is selfishness more apparent than in the political and civic world. Interests are the dominating factor, even with many apparently good people. Very few people fulfil the obligations of citizenship under the direction of this law of sacrifice, and yet, perhaps this is the realm in which the law of sacrifice has its largest opportunity of operation, and in which its most glorious triumphs may be won.

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you.”²

As love is the essence of the Divine nature, so it is the ripe fruitage of the Divine life in man, the expression of matured Christian character, and the motive of highest Christian conduct.

¹*The Next Great Awakening.* ²John 13.34

Has love nothing to say with reference to the citizen's responsibility? Is its activity limited to individual relationships, and excluded from all things in which we deal with the collectivity? Who dares to put that limitation upon Christ's great law of love?

No; we may place no limit upon the operations of love. Whatever he may rightly be called upon to do in life, however complex the organisation may become, the Christian man is called to fulfil his obligation, to render his service, in the spirit of sacrificial love.

In a word, the Christian is called to co-operate with Christ, not only in seeking to bring men one by one to reconciliation with God, but also in the influencing of the world in all its organised life—that sin and wrong may be defeated, and righteousness and truth increasingly prevail. Only by the exercise of such social influence and service can he fulfil the obligations laid upon him in the teaching of his Lord.

The second principle may therefore be stated thus: The Christian is called to co-operate with Christ in all His work.

THE SECOND QUESTION: WITHER?

THE GOAL OF CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE PRINCIPLE STATED:

THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS WHICH THE CHRISTIAN SEEKS TO ESTABLISH MUST BE THOSE
OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

“And there followed great voices in heaven and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever.” — Revelation 11.15

“The kingdom of God is ... righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

— Romans 14.17

“All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.” — Matthew 7.12

“Those who are most in sympathy with Jesus Christ demand for every man a real opportunity of achieving his highest and his best; and all the laws and customs of human society must be changed to whatever extent may be found necessary to secure this inalienable birthright for every human being.”

Hugh Price Hughes

“We now recognise all natural laws as expressions of the divine will, whether in the physical, intellectual, or spiritual world, so that the words ‘Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven’ mean to us perfect obedience to all the laws of body, mind—and spirit, resulting in a perfected manhood—a body worthy to be the temple of the indwelling God, more beautiful than any sanctuary ever reared with hands; a mind transparent to truth, and like the diamond radiant in its light; a heart so pure that its unsullied consciousness reflects the face of God. They mean perfect obedience to all the laws of the social organism, and hence the perfecting of Society, the sanctifying of all human relationships and institutions—a civilisation whose life is righteousness and whose law is love.”

Josiah Strong

THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THERE can be no definition of the principles of Christian citizenship apart from a clear vision of, and a broad outlook upon, issues of the work of Christ in this world. The Kingdom which He proclaimed must be the goal of His social endeavour. And yet this vision of a goal is lamentably lacking. With many true and honest workers there seems to be little thought beyond the discovery of a present palliative for a pressing need, and consequently the result their effort is often futile.

The Socialists appear to be almost the only exceptions to the rule, and their philosophy staggers the average man—he regards it as an Utopian dream. But the dream is no real detriment, and its Utopian character is no reason for depreciation. It has been said that “no man ever builds a cottage on the earth who has not first built a castle in the air.” In every department of life the better thing first becomes the ideal, and then the real.

If the Socialist’s programme is to be criticised, it must be along other lines than these. Its defect lies in its tendency to hardness, and the dominance of the materialistic. Whilst humanitarian and beneficent in its intention, it often lacks the light and heat which give beauty and impart power. When God is left out the colours are very drab, and the enterprise deals only with the dust.

Has the Christian citizen any goal in the matter of his political responsibilities? A man’s direction is ever determined by the place he wants to reach. The captain of the ocean liner takes his chart and lays down his track in the direction of the port to which he is bound, and then sails by his chart. Has the Christian citizen any vision of destiny—any port to which he would bring the ship of state—which will enable him to make his chart and determine his course.

If he is a man of God, he ought to be a man of vision; if he walks in comradeship with his Lord, seeing from His point of view, and entering into all the enterprises of His heart, he will see “the new heaven and the new earth,”¹ wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the principle which determines all his social work will be realisation of that Kingdom of God.

¹Revelation 21.1

This vision of the Kingdom is of supreme importance. If only the Church of Christ could see it, if only His followers' eyes were opened to behold its beauty, instead of the drift and cross currents that characterise so much of our movement to-day, driven by the mighty dynamic of His love, we should ever be steering toward that

“One far off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.”¹

We have already defined the Kingdom of God in its ultimate issue as a perfected world, the government of which centres in the throne of God. It may be well at this stage, whilst endeavouring to see the fair vision of the Kingdom more clearly, to consider more fully the meaning of the words by the use of which Christ describes His goal.

A kingdom is a nation governed by a king! The almost discredited doctrine of the Divine right of kings, and the universal movement toward the limitation of monarchical power, all point to the fact that the inherent thought of kingship was the absolute right to rule—the supremacy of one will. Such power requires perfection for its proper exercise; and since all men are imperfect, the tendency throughout the ages has been toward the depreciation of autocracy, and the appreciation of democracy.

Let it be remembered that the kingly office is of human origin. God's purpose in all His dealings with the Hebrew nation was that of being Himself their ruler. He allowed them to choose a king, but it was a concession to their unbelief, and the whole story of their history under kingly government was one of disastrous failure. God's purposes, however, may be postponed—they are never abandoned. That which failed of realisation in the old Hebrew economy, will yet obtain in the Kingdom of God. He will be King, absolute and supreme. His will, dominating the life of His people, will yet be no tyranny, for the perfection of His government will be manifest in the fact that it ever looks to the highest good of the governed, and for this reason it will command the hearty assent of all involved.

A kingdom is, further, an organised community under the government of a king. If there is one will, there must be many administrators thereof. There can be no government in which the subject has relation to the throne alone. Indeed, all human

¹Lord Tennyson

administration is wholly concerned with the interrelation of the governed. And yet, in thinking of the Kingdom of God, the tendency has been to omit this important matter altogether. The perfecting of the individual in his relation to God is readily acknowledged, but the fact that he will remain a social being, having of necessity social relationships, which relationships must be perfected also, has been often overlooked.

Here there in its simplest form is the goal of the Christian citizen's endeavour: a Kingdom in which God's will is operative in every phase and department of life; His will, the law; His people, the ready and glad administrators thereof.

The question at once arises as to the character of the social order which must obtain in such a Kingdom. The answer is not left to speculation. Paul says: "The Kingdom of God is...righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."¹ It may be argued that he was speaking of his own time and not of a Kingdom yet to be realised; but it must be remembered that if the "kingdom of the world"² has not yet "become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ," His Kingdom is in the world. Christ said: "The kingdom of God is in the midst of you."³ There will be no change in the essential character of the Kingdom; it will only be a matter of extent and manifestation. The Apostle's words, then, indicate three social characteristics of that Kingdom.

"Righteousness." The word contains the thought of equity, perfect justice, essential right, and excludes all wrong and wrongs. This is the very thing for which humanity ever sighs. The consciousness of wrong is everywhere apparent. Professor Huxley, who certainly did not look out upon life from the standpoint of Christian prophecy, and who had little sympathy with Socialistic thinking, was keenly conscious of the unsatisfactory nature of the present social order. He said: "Even the best of modern civilisations appears to me to exhibit a condition of mankind which neither embodies any worthy ideal, nor even possesses the merit of stability. I do not hesitate to express the opinion that if there is no hope of a large improvement of the condition of the greater part of the human family; if it is true that the increase of knowledge, the winning of a greater dominion over nature which is its consequence, and the wealth which follows upon that dominion, are to make no difference in the extent and

¹Romans 14.17 ²Revelation 11.15 ³Luke 17.21

the intensity of want, with its concomitant physical and moral degradation amongst the masses of the people, I should hail the advent of some kindly comet, which would sweep the whole affair away, as a desirable consummation.”¹

The consciousness of social wrong is becoming increasingly keen, both in the world and in the Church of Christ. Mr. A. Henderson M.P. has recently said in reference to the spirit of inquiry upon social subjects, that “there has been a growing consciousness that all was not right in our social system, and the Churches have become increasingly conscious of their responsibility.”²

If, then, things are not right in the world, what is wanted? The answer is plain—the righteousness of the Kingdom of God. It is of no use to simply contemplate the wrong and experiment with remedies that may be worse than the disease. Let the vision of the Kingdom wherein all wrong is righted break upon the consciousness; study well its character, and at any rate the right will be seen, and progress in its direction will become a possibility.

Any such study of the social character of the Kingdom must begin with the rights and limitations of the individual; for, after all, society exists for the people and not people for society. Man, and not an organisation, is the crowning work of creation, and the perfect organisation will ever minister to the perfecting of man.

What, then, are the elementary rights which a perfect social order will give to the individual man? First of all there is the right to live. God has made full provision for meeting the needs of all mankind. It ought surely to follow that every man should have access to that provision. The right to live means something more than the provision of police protection, it includes a right to procure all things necessary to the sustenance of life. Does anyone imagine that when the Kingdom of God has come there will be processions of unemployed, singing, “We’ve got no work to do”?

Of course, today, we have those who will not work when there is work to do, but it is undoubtedly true that thousands who honestly desire to work are denied the chance. Such a thing is unthinkable in the Kingdom of God, which it is the Christian’s business to promote. The cry of a “right to work,” which is being heard more and more loudly in the

¹ *Nineteenth Century*, May 1890 ² *Christianity and the Working Classes*

political hubbub of the hour, is but the vocalisation of the very first factor in the righteousness which characterises the Kingdom of God.

Then there is the right which every man should enjoy to realise his own life. That is true liberty. God has not made us all alike. He has given to every man “according to his several ability.”¹ “There are diversities of workings.”² The social order of the Kingdom will not seek to make all alike, or strive to make all men realise their lives according to the same pattern. There is an infinite variety of expression in nature, and yet its life is one. It would be an illuminating document if we could only procure a return of the lives that have been blighted because they have been forced by the circumstances of their environment to enter a vocation in which their true selves have had no opportunity of expression. No such stifling of the life will be possible in the Kingdom of God. No Gray will sing then of “a mute inglorious Milton.”* Every man will not only have the opportunity to discover his real talent, but will be helped by the social order to realise it to the full, for the benefit and blessing of the commonwealth. We have a long way to travel yet before this ideal is realised in the most civilised communities, but it is involved in the righteousness which is to characterise the Kingdom for which we strive.

Once again, every man has a right to the quest of happiness. God did not make man to be a mere drudge. It is true that sin brought a curse, and toil was intensified thereby. But Jesus Christ came to annul the curse; and the original intention, frustrated through man’s folly, is yet to be realised in the “restoration of all things.”³

These rights have had recognition from time to time. They were epitomized in the American Declaration of Independence in the words: “All men are born equal, and enjoy certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” But America has not realised the millennial order notwithstanding. One reason at least is, that no emphasis of rights is sufficient apart from their essential limitations.

¹Matthew 25.15 ²1 Corinthians 12.4 ³Acts 3.21

* Quotation from Thomas Grays’ popular poem, *An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (PE)

These limitations are summed up for us by Christ Himself in the Golden Rule: "All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them."¹ The operation of this law in the Kingdom of God will prevent the abuse of any right, or its exercise to the detriment of other men. Just how it will operate we shall endeavour to see when we come to study the Political Economy of the Kingdom of God.

It need hardly be said that this by no means exhausts the subject of righteousness. It is a bare beginning, but if it serves to focus thought upon the character of the Kingdom which we proclaim, and leads us to test the issues and try the problems of today in the light thereof, it at least have helped to make the chart by which we must steer in the troubled water of our political life.

"Peace." This is a characterisation of the whole life, and not merely the indication of an international relation. Indeed, in the Kingdom of God there will be no nations in our sense of the word. The government will be one—it will be "the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ."² The word indicates the spirit which will govern all social relationships. There will be an absence of jealousy, and all kindred evils which tend to strife, and consequently there will be the social enrichment which must issue from the abolition of the waste which is inevitable in war. Peace will issue in plenty; the spiritual will be productive of material good.

How all this contrasts with present day principles and experience! The struggle for existence means strife everywhere. The strong come out on top, and the weak go to the wall. The world is a great battlefield, and the worsted in the conflict are lying all about us. Some radical change is inevitable before the ideal of the Kingdom is realised—"on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased."³ But of that more anon. At the moment we are looking at the Kingdom, seeking to know the character of its life—and, lo, it is peace.

"Joy in the Holy Ghost" In all the Scriptures the Holy Spirit appears as the administrator of the things of God. Hence this is equivalent to saying joy in the consciousness that God reigns. The first condition of the Kingdom is submission to God, and those who have only heard these terms have imagined that beyond it lay a servitude, gloomy by reason of the reluctance of the service, or the fear of Him whom

¹Matthew 7.12 ²Revelation 11.15 ³Luke 2.14

they obey. Ruskin* speaks of Christians praying, “Thy will be done,” as if their Father’s will were always to kill their babies, or do something unpleasant to them.” All this is entirely wrong. God never compels any man to submit to Him—otherwise the Kingdom would have come long ago. When men do submit, when they “taste and see that the Lord is good,” they will find indeed that, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.”¹

The Kingdom of God will consist of those who have submitted to His throne of their own choice, and who find in the perfection of His government the fullest opportunity of realising life, which becomes exultant in its joy.

In closing this chapter it may be well to summarise the things we have tried to see. The Kingdom of God in its social aspect consists of:

A people governed by God.

A people administering the Will of God in all departments of life.

A people among whom righteousness obtains.

A people between whom peace abides.

A people glad in the exuberance of a fully realised life.

That is the goal so far as social conditions are concerned. It may be far away; but it is the City of God—the quest of all those who trust and follow Christ.

The third principle may therefore be stated thus: The Social Conditions which the Christian seeks to establish must be those of the Kingdom of God.

⁴Psalm 34.8

*John Ruskin (1819-1900) was, among other things, a leading social thinker, artist, writer and philanthropist who was very influential in the years leading up to the First World War.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE PRINCIPLE STATED:

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY WHICH THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN SEEKS TO ESTABLISH
MUST BE THAT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

“For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another.”

– Galatians 5.13

“And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.”

– Acts 2.44-45

“Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is needful for me:
Lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord?
Or lest I be poor, and steal,
And use profanely the name of my God.”

– Proverbs. 30.8-9.

“Go, put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue.”

R.W. Emerson

“The best way to come to truth being to examine things as really they are, and not to conclude they are, as we fancy of ourselves, or have been taught by others to imagine.”

John Locke

“Socialism may or may not be practicable, but to it the brotherhood of man is something very real. The endeavour of Socialism is to carry out the principles of brotherhood in all the relations of life, by introducing a social system, in which the maxim shall obtain, ‘one for all; all for one.’”

R. T. Ely

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

It need hardly be said that the Bible nowhere claims to be a treatise on Economics. Indeed, a superficial reading may result in the opinion that it says nothing whatever upon the subject. A closer and more thoughtful study will, however, reveal the fact that it indicates the foundation principles upon which the final and perfect system of political economy will be built. It would be strange indeed if the book which has been given to be

“A lamp unto my feet,
And a light unto my path,”¹

should contain no suggestion as to the laws which should govern the interrelation of man.

Political Economy, in all its ramifications, may be regarded as a difficult and complicated study; but, after all, the underlying principles are few and simple. These alone are included within the scope of this book. The method of their outworking is another matter. Only let it be said that there is no truth of God, no principle of Divine government, which is impracticable. Sin may postpone its realisation, but ultimately it will prevail. Inevitably the Political Economy of the Kingdom of God will be the harmonised expression of the justice and goodness of God.

If, then, we can discover the principles which must determine that order, we shall at least see in what direction we have to move, in order that our social influence may contribute toward the building of the City of God.

At the foundation of all economic organisation we discover two, and only two, opposing principles, namely, competition and co-operation. That they are opposites is apparent to all. Our first business is to discover which of these two harmonises with the spirit and teaching of the Word of God concerning the ideal life toward which Christ is leading a redeemed world.

Competition occupies the world's stage, and it is possible in some measure at least to “try its spirit.” The very word suggests a “struggle for existence.” It flings the unfit aside as worthless, and the weak inevitably go to the wall. The pathway of the world's progress is strewn with human wreckage, and in these boasted days of wealth and high

¹Psalm 119.105

attainment the cry of the crushed is probably more piercing and shrill than ever before. James Russell Lowell has interpreted the inevitable outcome of society organised on a competitive basis in the challenging question which he puts into the lips of Christ:

“Have ye founded your thrones and altars, then,
On the bodies and souls of living men?
And think ye that building shall endure,
Which shelters the noble and crushes the poor ?”¹

Co-operation, on the other hand, is instinct with the spirit of brotherhood and mutual service. It cares for the unfit, and where there is no fault, it exacts no penalty. It may be said that this is all theory—a dream. The world has no effective demonstration of society so organised. Quite true! But the same may be said of the individual Christian life. Apart from Christ, the centuries have not produced a single perfect man. The disciples of Christ believe, however, that by the Sacrifice of Himself He provided a dynamic all-powerful enough to remake sinning man, and “set him before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy.”² And if this is true of the individual, why not of society? The fact that the co-operative commonwealth has never been realised is no argument, at this point.

The question for the Christian citizen is, which principle best embodies the spirit and the law of the Kingdom of God? When stated thus there can only be one answer. It is simply unthinkable that in the Kingdom of economic strife, with all its inevitable sequence of defeat and distress, can be the foundation of the social order. Competition knows nothing of love, but in the Golden Age, toward which our gaze is turned, the determining factor in all things will be the law of love.

Benjamin Kidd, whilst regarding a competitive social organisation as one of the “organic laws of existence,”³ admits that it involves “conditions that can never have any ultimate sanction in the reason” of man. If, then, there is no rational sanction for a competitive social organisation, there certainly is no Divine sanction for the same.

But it is contended that competition is an essential factor in that struggle for existence without which all progress will cease. Competition may be essential, but not

¹*The Parable* ²1 Jude 24 ³*Social Evolution*

always for bread. To say that there can be no advance in the world's life apart from an interminable scramble for the food, clothing, and other necessities, is to argue that man will never know any higher sanction than stomach, and that he will never a higher plane of life than the fool, who said to himself: "Soul, you hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry."¹

Mr. Kidd, in the work to which reference has already been made, very forcefully indicates the measure in which Christianity has contributed to the "Social transformation which has been slowly taking place in our Western civilisation."² He points out very clearly the work of the altruistic spirit in the changes that have been wrought. While competition remains, it has moved on to higher planes. And yet when he comes to discuss "Modern Socialism" his argument is based upon "human nature being what it is." Christianity does not contemplate human nature remaining what it is. Mr. Kidd is witness to the ethical progress that has been made. Why must that progress cease? If Christianity has wrought so much, is it "a draft on our imagination" to suppose that it will continue to work until competition gives place to co-operation as the foundation principle of organised society.

Professor Drummond surely states the case from the Christian point of view when he says:

"It is impossible to conceive that the Ascent of Man should always depend upon his appetites, that in God's world there should be nothing better to attract him than food and raiment, that he should take no single step towards a higher life except when driven to it. As there comes a time in a child's life when coercion gives place to free and conscious choice, the day comes to the world when the aspirations of the spirit begin to compete with, to neutralise, and to supplant the compulsions of the body. Against that day in the heart of humanity, Nature had made full provision. For there, prepared by a profounder chemistry than that which was to relieve the strain on the physical side, had gathered through the ages a force in whose presence the energies of the Animal Struggle are as naught. Beside the Struggle for the Life of others, the Struggle for Life is but a passing phase. As old, as deeply sunk in Nature, this further force was destined from the first to replace the Struggle for Life, and to build a nobler superstructure on the foundations which it laid. To establish these

¹Luke 12.19 ²*Social Evolution*

foundations was all that the Animal Struggle was ever designed to do. It has laid them well; yet it is only when the Struggle for Life stands projected against the larger influence with which all through history—and in an infinitely profound sense through moral history—it has been allied, that at once its worth and its ignominy are seen.”¹

We conclude, therefore, that when the purposes of grace are fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has come, the foundation principle of its economic life will be co-operation and not competition.

Political Economy has to do with the laws which govern the production and distribution of the world's wealth. The Bible has more to say upon these subjects than is generally supposed, but for the purpose of this study it will suffice if we can discover some simple fundamental principles which will condition the operations of each department of our theme.

Production is the result of a Divine provision, and a human appropriation by means of diligent toil. Man creates nothing. “Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.”² But in order to possess, there must be labour on the part of man. The spiritual application of this principle is clearly stated. But God is consistent in all His work, and the laws which govern spiritual gifts must surely govern material gifts also. In the beginning of his second Epistle—the burden of which is the strengthening and preserving of the spiritual life—the Apostle Peter says: “Grace to you and peace be multiplied the knowledge of God and of Jesus Lord; seeing that *His divine power granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness*, through knowledge of Him that called us by own glory and virtue; whereby *He hath granted unto us His precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and *for this very cause adding on your part all diligence*, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge temperance; and in your temperance patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness love of the brethren; and in your love of the brethren love.”³

Note the argument as emphasised in the italicised passages. God has made all provision; therefore give diligence in order to appropriate the provision. The farmer

¹*The Ascent of Man* ²James 1.17 ³2 Pete 1.2-7

does not create his crop. Soil and seed, sunshine and rain, are all the Divine provision; but, nevertheless, his crop depends upon the measure of diligence with which he works his farm. This is true in every department of life.

Now, if provision for human need is the gift of God, but its appropriation is dependent upon human toil, common justice requires that a very elementary principle shall govern all the economic laws of production, namely, that every man have access to the provision, and consequently an opportunity for the toil by means of which he may possess. In other words, there must be no monopoly of Divine provision.

The law of Moses affords a fitting illustration of this principle at work in provision of the Year of Jubilee. Israel was a primitive and pastoral people. There were only two commodities concerning which monopoly was possible—life and land. A man might suffer loss through his own thriftlessness and folly and, of course, his family would inevitably suffer with him; but he could not permanently enslave himself, or disinherit his posterity. The Year of Jubilee brought freedom and a new opportunity, together with the restoration of his heritage. The method was adapted to the circumstances of a people just entering upon national life, with no experience of economic problems; but the principle and purpose was obviously to prevent the enslavement and disinheriting of a portion of the people, and the monopoly of power and land by the rest. It was the application of elemental justice to the life and need of the age.

The Kingdom of God will undoubtedly realise this principle, though in a somewhat different way. There will be no return to the conditions of primitive life. God moves in the fulfilment of His purposes from the garden to the city. In that age the work of subduing the earth will have been carried far beyond its present stage. Production will be far more marvellous than today. How then can the principle be applied? In view of the conclusion that the fundamental principle of organised Society will be that of co-operation, it follows that in order to give all access to the Divine provision, with equality of opportunity for the appropriation thereof, there can be no private ownership in any of the things which are the essential and natural provision of God. The community will possess all the means of production, and they will be used for the benefit and blessing of all. No monopolist! No social outcast! To every man his opportunity of access to the gifts of God, that by his own diligence he may provide for the needs of his own life, and such as may be dependent upon him.

We turn now to the laws which govern the distribution of the world's wealth. This is the crux of the problem in the present age. This industrial revolution of the last century has created new and complicated conditions in which it is exceedingly difficult to indicate the true mean of justice. In the age which preceded the introduction of machinery and the factory, things were for the most part made at home. Power was manual, and the product depended chiefly upon the energy and skill of the worker. There was an independence about it all, which on the one hand tended to make a man depend upon himself alone, and on the other to isolate him from his fellowmen.

With the advent of machinery, production has been multiplied many times. Factories have supplanted the home workshop. Mechanical power has been substituted for manual, and the independence of former days has given place to a measure of inter-dependence which is becoming more and more apparent throughout the world.

All have benefited by the change, but not equally. Inventions benefit Society at large, but always at the expense of the men whose labour they render effete. Work is necessarily irregular and uncertain when production is governed by the speculative element in competition. Population tends inevitably to concentrate in great centres, and its measure approximates to the maximum demand for labour in the locality. But the maximum is not maintained, and when that standard is diminished, lack of employment and poverty ensue. These are some of the economic aspects of the problem of distribution in the present day, under a competitive order. The whole thinking world regards the situation as eminently unsatisfactory. But, after all, is it not the natural result of competition? There can be no battle that does not issue in carnage.

But we return to our quest. Does the Bible give us any light as to the principle which will govern distribution in the Kingdom of God? We have seen that there can be no monopoly of Divine provision, but what of the product of toil? Is every man to have just what he can get? If so, the battle is still to the strong, though perchance under fairer conditions.

Several of the parables of Christ bear upon this problem, revealing the principles which govern the Divine awards, and, surely that is to say, indicate the eternal

standards of justice. The two parables of the Pounds and the Talents alone teach all that is required*.

The parable of the Pounds teaches that man is rewarded according to the measure of his diligence. Each man started out with a pound—equal. One produced ten pounds, the second five, and the third brought back the original one unused. The first was given authority over ten cities, the second over five, whilst the third was deprived of the pound he possessed.

The parable of the Talents teaches that man's fidelity is measured and rewarded in its relation to opportunity and capacity. Each man set out with a different endowment. One had five; another two; and another one. The first two were equally successful, though in the end one produced ten to the other's five. They both doubled their endowment, that is, proportionately they did alike, and they received a like reward. The words of commendation addressed to both are identical.

Here, then, Christ teaches us that two factors enter into the fundamental principles of distribution in the economy of God—namely, diligence and opportunity. There is to be no distribution at all apart from work. "If any man will not work, neither let him eat."¹ A man's reward will depend in the first instance upon the diligence with which he has laboured. But this will not be judged by the product of his toil alone. Opportunity must be considered. The initial endowment must not be left out of count. The result of the toil of two may be represented by ten and five respectively, but they have been equally faithful to their opportunity—then their reward will be the same.

Society today is far from acting upon this twofold principle in the distribution of its wealth. It may be said that such an ideal could not possibly be attained where competition reigns. All the more reason why the Christian citizen should look toward a gradual reconstruction of society upon a basis which will admit of elementary justice in the distribution of the world's goods.

There remains yet another aspect of the economic problem concerning which the teaching of the Bible is very clear. Given an order in which production and distribution are governed by the principles of Divine justice, how will the good thus distributed be

¹2 Thessalonians 3.10

*Parable of the Pounds, Luke 19.11-28; Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25.14-30 (PE)

used. In the Kingdom of God there will be not only a perfectly just administration of the laws of production and distribution, there will also be a disinterested use of the things rightly possessed.

The communism of the early Church had nothing to do with the problems of production and distribution of the world's wealth. It was purely a matter of administering the goods which they possessed. Here two principles appear. First, personal responsibility. Peter addressing Ananais, concerning the gift, in presentation of which he had dissembled, said: "Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?"¹ Evidently the community of goods was not obligatory, and certainly it was no substitute for individual responsibility. Second, unselfishness. If there was no compulsion in the matter, there was encouragement to pool all personal possessions in order to a generous provision for the need of all.

In closing this chapter we shall do well to review our study and indicate its results. We have concluded that:

1. The political economy of the Kingdom of God will be built upon the foundation principle of co-operation, instead of competition.
2. Its method of production will give full access to the provisions of God to all, that all by labour may produce the wealth necessary for the sustenance and enjoyment of life.
3. Its method of distributing that produce will be governed by the principles of diligence in application, and the measure of opportunity enjoyed.
4. Its citizens will be personally responsible for the administration of the wealth thus justly possessed; but even in this the law of love will exile all selfishness, so that personal possessions will be used for the good of all.

The Christian citizen often finds himself confronted with economic problems concerning which there is heated controversy between political partisans. How shall he guide his own actions? What principle should guide the exercise of his influence? He is making for a goal! He is in co-operation with Christ in the redemption of the world! Let him judge all the present issues in the light of the ideal, and—in so far as the methods

¹Acts 5.4

harmonise with principles set forth in the next chapter—support those enterprises which move in the direction of the goal. The principle may be stated thus:

The Political Economy which the Christian citizen seeks to establish must be that of the Kingdom of God.

THE THIRD QUESTION: HOW?

THE METHOD OF CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

THE METHOD OF CHRIST

THE METHOD OF CHRIST

THE PRINCIPLE STATED:

THE METHOD OF THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN MUST BE GOVERNED BY THE PRINCIPLES
WHICH DETERMINED THE METHOD OF CHRIST

“My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” – John 18.36

“The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, La, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”
– Luke 17. 20-21 (margin)

“Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
– John 3.3

“Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” – Matthew 5.16

“Human improvement is from within outwards.”
J. A. Froude

“Truth only needs to be for once spoke out,
And there’s such music in her, such strange rhythm,
As makes men’s memories her joyous slaves,
And clings around the soul, as the sky clings
Round the mute earth, forever beautiful,
And, if o’erclouded, only to burst forth
More all-embracingly divine and clear;
Get but the truth once uttered, and ‘tis like
A star newborn, that drops into its place,
And which, once circling in its placid round,
Not all the tumult of the earth can shake.”

James Russell Lowell

“He who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed.”

Abraham Lincoln

THE METHOD OF CHRIST

THE third question is a very practical one. How? It is comparatively easy to recognise the sanctions of social service, and even to see the fair vision of a golden age that shall bring heaven to earth. But how to answer the one and realise the other is a more difficult matter. Still, the question must be quietly faced. God never commands the impossible, nor does He mock His people with visions that cannot be realised.

It must be obvious that the Christian engaged in the service of Christ, and desiring to realise the purpose of Christ, must adopt the method of Christ.

It needs to be remembered, however, that methods are of the moment. They are the adaptation of principle and purpose to the needs of a given hour. In thinking of the method of Christ, therefore, the attention needs to be concentrated, not so much on the things that Christ did, as upon the principles which determined their doing.

It is difficult to deal with this theme without entering into discussion of prophecy concerning the second coming of Christ. There is wide divergence between the various schools of interpretation on this subject. All will agree, however, that the ultimate triumph—the Kingdom of the Father—lies beyond all the processes with which prophecy deals. In this study we are concerned only with the Christian citizen's responsibility toward that Kingdom, in the present age. Whatever new influences may be brought to bear upon the work of human redemption, by the advent of a new dispensation, there are two propositions which must certainly be true.

1. The present age is a necessary part of the Divine process. God is moving through the processes of the present toward the crisis which marks their culmination, and which is evidently marked in Scripture by the Second Advent, whatever interpretation may be given to that event. There may be other processes and crises beyond that, before the work is finally done. The important point to be borne in mind is that all such processes are sequential. Each grows out of the other, and each contributes its quota to the ultimate result. It is perfectly clear in the teaching of Christ that the world will not be won when He comes again, but that does not at all imply that nothing will have been accomplished. If He does not find "faith on the earth,"¹ it may well be that through the witness of His truth in this age, the world's order may be prepared for such changes as His coming may portend.

¹Luke 18.8

2. The method of Christ will be consistent; *i.e.* it will be governed by the same principles throughout. In the activities of life the method will vary, and in the dawning of a new dispensation the apparent change may be yet more clearly marked. But let it not be thought for one moment that such new departure marks the failure of the method that it supersedes, or the waste of Divine and human energy in the period that is past. There are stages in the process of building the Kingdom of God, and each stage may call for a somewhat different activity, but the design, born in the mind and heart of God, is unchanged, and the work throughout is governed by the consistent laws of God's own character and purpose.

If these propositions are granted, it becomes possible to turn away from the contemplation of future dispensations, in order to study the method of Christ during His earthly ministry, with a view of discovering the principles which must govern the method of His followers in the present age. Two important principles, of a negative character, were uttered by Him in the course of His teaching concerning the Kingdom. Two others of a most positive character are discovered by observation of His life and work.

(1) "MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD"

By a curious misconception this has sometimes been interpreted as meaning "not in this world."¹ But the words "in" and "of" are not synonymous. The context surely reveals the meaning of Christ. He says: "If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." He was speaking not of the location, but of the method of His Kingdom, and in so doing repudiates the method which has ever been the world's means of establishing kingdoms, namely, force.

His whole ministry was a protest against that method. On the very threshold of His work we read the account of His temptation. In the course of it, "the devil taketh Him unto an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them"; and he said unto Him, "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me."² Wherein lay the point of temptation? Dr. Campbell Morgan says that the tempter "pointed out a short cut to a Divine destination,"³ and without doubt the expression of the worship demanded was the adoption of the world's method

¹John 18.36 ²Matthew 4.8-9 ³*The Crises of the Christ*

of force in the propaganda that lay before Him. The answer was emphatic—"Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."¹

Throughout His ministry it is evident that both His disciples and the multitude desired and expected Him to adopt the method of the world. It is possible that He might have rallied all Israel to His banner if He had only proclaimed Himself as King, and leader of their hosts against Rome and the world. "They were about to come and take Him by force, to make Him king,"² and, of course, maintain His kingdom by force also; but He "withdrew again into the mountain alone."

The reason for this attitude of Christ is apparent when it is remembered that whilst force may control conduct, it cannot change character, and character is the foundation upon which the Kingdom of God is to be built. All history bears its testimony to the failure of force. There was a time when the Church was well-nigh master of the world. Emperors bowed before the papal throne, and rulers quaked at the thunder of its voice. Departing from the method of its Lord, the Church adopted the method of the world, force, and the issue was the darkest days of the Middle Ages. The Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell presents what was perhaps the strongest, purest, and best government the world has known. And yet when the sceptre fell from the masterful hand of the great Protector, the licentiousness of the restored Stuart regime only serves to prove the truth affirmed, that whilst such government may control conduct, the character remains substantially unchanged.

To say this is not to belittle the importance of good government. It is rather to avoid the mistake of depending upon such force for the realisation of the Kingdom of God. The province of government is to create an environment in which it is easy to do right and hard to do wrong. It is educational in its influence. But, after all, human government is the index rather than the instrument of the Kingdom of God. It is a truism that "you cannot legislate ahead of public opinion." The government is the concrete expression of the common consciousness of right and wrong. It indicates the measure in which the Kingdom has come. It is not so much the weapon with which Christ fights and wins, as the mirror in which is reflected the victory won.

¹Matthew 4.10 ²John 6.15

(2) “THE KINGDOM OF GOD COMETH NOT WITH OBSERVATION...
LO, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS IN THE MIDST OF YOU”¹

This declaration of Christ was His reply to those who would define, and consequently limit, the operations of the Kingdom of God. Man’s horizon would need to be far extended in order to observe all that contributes to the coming of the Kingdom; and yet the Kingdom is in the midst. Its operations have to do with the subtle action of spiritual influences. There may be consciousness of their presence, but their track cannot be defined. The result alone appears.

The prophecy of Habakkuk is an illustration of what this means. The prophet complains to Jehovah that He “will not hear,”² that He “will not save. So far as he can see, God is doing nothing. But the answer comes—“I work a work in your days, which ye will not believe though it be told you.”³ God is raising up the Chaldeans for the execution of His purposes. The prophet in wonder repairs to his watchtower; and in the end, when he has learned that the operations of God transcend human vision, sings in exultant faith:

“Though the fig tree shall not blossom,
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
The labour of the olive shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no meat;

The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.”⁴

Cowper has voiced the same thought in his well-known hymn:

“God moves in a mysterious way,	Deep in unfathomable mines
His wonders to perform;	Of never failing skill
He plants His footsteps in the sea,	He treasures up His bright designs,
And rides upon the storm.	And works His sovereign will.

¹Luke 17.20-21 margin ²Habukkuk. 1.2 ³Habukkuk 1.5 ⁴Habukkuk 1.5

His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding every hour; The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flower.	Blind unbelief is sure to err, And scan His work in vain; God is His own interpreter, And He will make it plain."
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(3) CHRIST EVER MOVED FROM THE CENTRE TO THE CIRCUMFERENCE

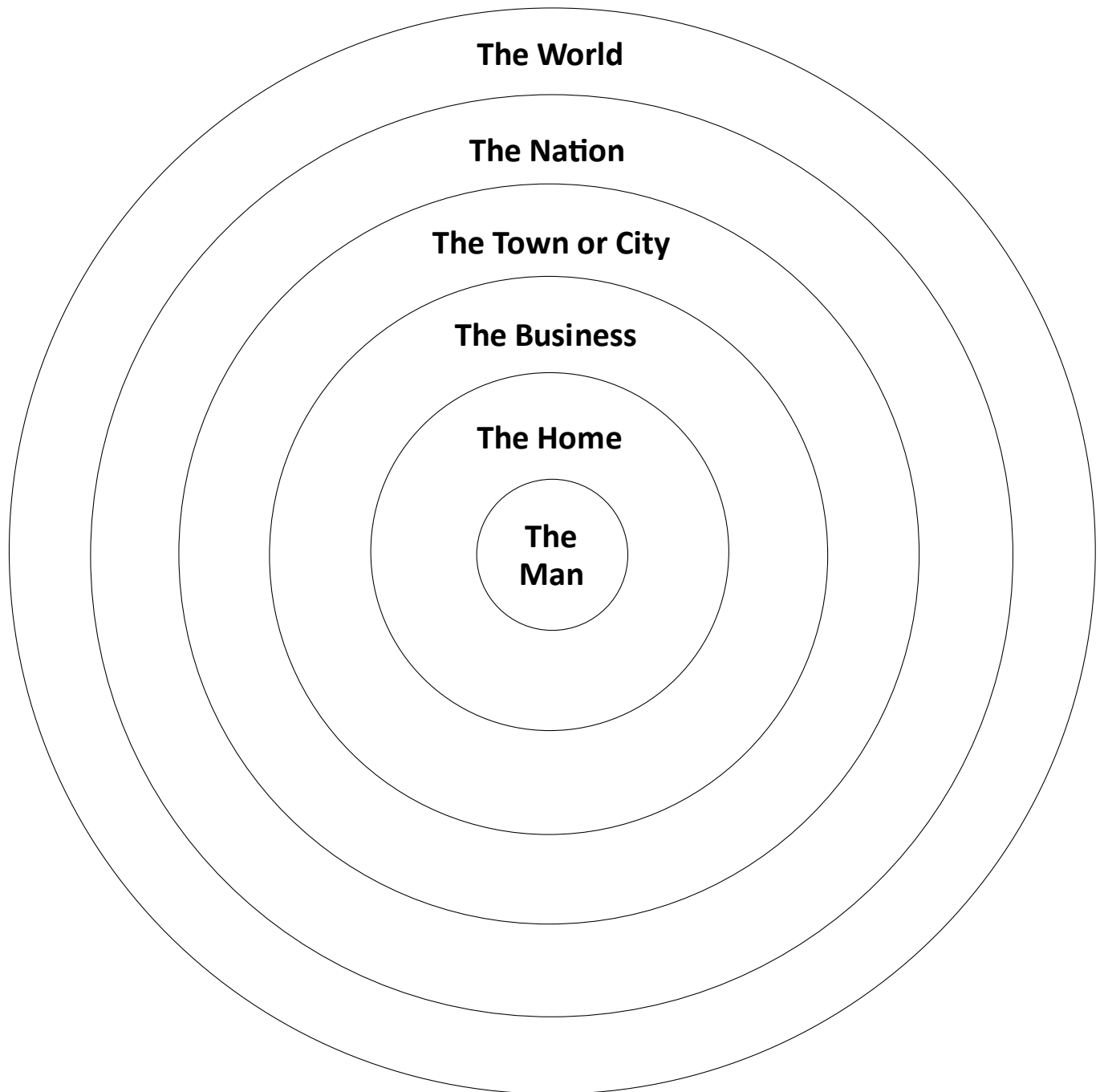
The Gospel story contains the record of what "Jesus began both to do and to teach."¹ The Acts of the Apostles tell of things which He continued to do through His early disciples, and the history of the centuries that have followed is in its truest value His story. It is unreasonable to expect that within the compass of that brief earthly ministry He should apply the teaching of the Kingdom to all the ramifications of an ever-changing life. He did, however, lay down the laws and principles of the Kingdom He came to proclaim, and in their application there is no phase of life that remains untouched.

The unit of Society is the man. The pivot upon which character turns is the individual will. Since Christ came to establish a Kingdom based upon character, His method begins with the unit—a man. "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God."² In the regeneration of the individual a centre is established from which radiate influences which reach the utmost circumference of life.

A centre exists only for its circumference, and a regenerate man lives only for the influence he can exert. Evangelism, rightly understood, is the mightiest factor in social reform. It proposes to remake the man, and then set him to remake his environment. Conversion is, in the purpose of Christ, preparation for social responsibility.

The point at which Evangelical Christianity has often failed, has been in its blindness to this fact. Its exponents have begun at the centre, but they have not gone on to the circumference. If it be admitted that by regeneration Christ creates character, and that the responsibility of the regenerate man is that of influence, who shall set bounds to that influence? Let a simple diagram illustrate the point.

¹Acts 1.1 ²John 3.3



At the centre is the man. Each circle represents the widening spheres which his influence is bound to touch. Home! Business! The City! The Nation! The World! He cannot help but touch them all, for he remains part of their very life. Every Christian will agree that the regenerate man must begin with setting wrong things right within his home, and go on to adjust the things of his business also, that he may “take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men.”¹ But who dare say that the Christian’s

¹Romans 12.17

influence is to be arrested at that point? Is his “light” to shine only within the home and place of business? Is the “salt” to operate in no wider circle? Surely all the followers of Christ should recognise that whilst beginning with the regeneration of the individual, His purposes reach out to the utmost limits of our life, and their responsibility is to do “all to the glory of God.”¹

For the simple reason that Christians have failed to make the influence of a Christ-centred life felt in these outer circles of responsibility, men are trying to correct things at the circumference. As you cannot draw a circle apart from a centre, so you cannot realise a regenerate society apart from the regeneration of the men who constitute it. To change the figure, these reformers have seen something of the fair ideal of the Kingdom of God, and are trying to build the superstructure, without reference to the foundation. But the sorry thing in this is, that they have been driven to it by the fact that the Church has been so busy with foundations, that the superstructure has hardly begun to appear, and so absorbed in the nearer circles, that it has failed to carry the ethic of Christ into the wider reaches of life.

(4) CHRIST EVER KEPT STEP WITH THE PROGRESS OF THE PURPOSES OF GOD

He could not be hurried, and He could not be held back. In the Gospel according to John there is an oft-recurring expression which illustrates this fact—“Mine hour.” Certain things must wait because His hour had not yet come. But why not? The set times of God are not the product of Divine caprice. They ever depend upon the fulfilment of purpose, the culmination of a process. Christ was obedient to this law of the Divine activity.

His enemies were constantly plotting to compass His death. On one occasion they “led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw Him down headlong. But He passing through the midst of them went His way.”² With perfect ease He escaped from them, because His hour had not yet come. Other things remained to be said and done before the time arrived for the cross. Later on we read that “He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem”³ and throughout His journey thither, He talked with His disciples about His Passion, and persisted in His purpose notwithstanding their constant endeavour to dissuade Him. The explanation lies in the fact that He was always in step with the progress of the purpose of God.

¹1 Corinthians 10.31 ²Luke 4.29-30 ³Luke 9.51

To know your work, and to quietly and persistently proceed to its accomplishment, is of the very essence of strength. It is in this that the strength of Christ appears. There was no feverish haste, or paralysing uncertainty. David's mighty men were successful warriors because they could "keep rank." In Christ this characteristic is supremely seen.

Its lack is the source of much weakness in the present age. Some are running ahead without the slightest reference to the goings of God. Others are lagging behind, and cannot be brought into line with the Divine activity. Feverish impatience and deadly indifference alike hinder the work of the Kingdom of God.

The zeal of the iconoclast is not enough. It is comparatively easy to destroy. It is quite another matter to build up. The work of Christ is constructive as well as destructive. Where wrong has been demolished, it is that some new building of the City of God may be erected upon the broad and safe foundation of righteousness. The destruction of one evil may but create the opportunity for another. The man who runs ahead may do untold harm. It is necessary for all to look ahead. The fair vision of the ultimate needs to be before the eye of every Christian citizen, but he accomplishes most who, seeing the vision, and in the light of its revelation, "does the next thing."

But if the Kingdom of God suffers from the misdirected zeal of some, it suffers far more from the deadly indifference of laggard Christians. Many a great reform has been conceived within the Church, but it has lacked the vitality and strength to give it birth. There are not wanting evidences of an awakening social conscience in the Church. The hosts of God have been asleep, and even now they have barely got beyond the point of rubbing their eyes, with a dazed consciousness of the call of a new day.

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain; ...

O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in His train."¹

This principle, however, involves a knowledge both of the movements of God and the needs of men. Such knowledge Christ had in perfect measure. He said, "I do

¹Bishop Heber

nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me; He hath not left Me alone; for I do always the things that are pleasing to Him.”¹ Again it is written of Him that “He needed not that anyone should bear witness concerning man; for He Himself knew what was in man.”² Such perfect knowledge may not be possible to the Christian, but surely it will be admitted that a more intimate acquaintance with the work of God and the need of men than is common in the Church, is both possible and desirable—indeed, it is indispensable to the progress of the Kingdom.

“He who would win the name of truly great
Must understand his own age and the next,
And make the present ready to fulfil
Its prophecy; and with the future merge
Gently and peacefully, as wave with wave.”³

At first it would seem that this responsibility involves a twofold research, and in opposite directions. It is not so. God and man are not far apart. They who would find God, and know what He is doing, must seek Him where He is at work, and that is at the very point where His purposes are being wrought out into the fabric of today’s life. The author just quoted again sings the truth:

“Where there is most sorrow and most want,
Where the high heart of man is trodden down
The most, ‘tis not because He hides His face
From them in wrath as purblind preachers prate;
Not so; there most is He, for there is He
Most needed.”

If Christians really desire to know the progress of the purposes of God, they must get into touch with the needs of their age. They must answer the call of responsibility, find their way to the line of battle, seek the place where the work of the Kingdom is being done, and there the promise shall be fulfilled: “If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God.”⁴

¹John 8.28-29 ²John 2.25 ³James Russell Lowell ⁴John 7.17

The Christian citizen whose methods are determined by these principles will not go astray. At any rate the one principle may be confidently affirmed.

The method of the Christian citizen must be governed by the principles which determined the method of Christ.

PRESENT-DAY MOVEMENTS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

“Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand:
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.”

Lord Tennyson

PRESENT-DAY MOVEMENTS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE remarkable changes wrought by the industrial revolution of the past century are universally admitted. Such changes go deep down, and affect the very foundations of social life. The general consciousness is of things that lie upon the surface, and cannot well be hidden. It will hardly be contended that the majority, even of Christian men, have given any serious consideration to the profound influence which those changes are likely to produce in the ethical issues of the social propaganda of our own age.

The substitution of mechanical for muscular power, whilst immensely enriching and benefiting the world at large, has effected a vast change in the position of the toiling masses. Of course, they have received some share of the increased wealth, and in the matter of material things they are doubtless better off than ever before. But the change of circumstances has made them less independent, and more inter-dependent.

Dr. Josiah Strong has outlined the development of this situation.¹ He says: "With the advent of the steam-engine, power became centralised. Manufacture forsook the home for the factory. The machine took the place of the hand. Industry became organised, which resulted in the division of labour. Whereas one man used to make fifty things, it now takes fifty men to make one thing; and each of the fifty is dependent on the other forty-nine for the finished product. And not only are the men in the same factory dependent on each other, but all the great industries have become interdependent, so that to stop one cripples all. Thus the industrial revolution has produced a social revolution.

"The organisation of industry has resulted in a much closer and more extended organisation of society.

"When the family was industrially sufficient unto itself, the community was little more than a collection of so many families. But when the industry of the community became organised and families became dependent on each other, there was developed a community life of which each individual was a part.

"As the organisation of industry extended, communities became dependent on each other, then different sections of the country became inter-dependent, until at

¹*The Times and Young Men*

length the whole nation lived one industrial and one social life, as its political life was one. And now nations are becoming dependent on each other, and there is being developed a world life, which will grow with the organisation of a world industry.

“Thus it has come about that while your grandfather and grandmother were well-nigh independent of all the world, you are well-nigh dependent on all the world.”

A little thought will make it quite apparent that injustice and wrong have a far larger opportunity for finding a place in so complex an organism than in the simple life of earlier days. Industrial progress has resulted in enterprise of a kind quite new to the world. Power has become centralised in a measure never before known. The noise of readjustment has filled the century. It would be strange indeed if so great a change should have been effected, involving inter-relation so manifold and new, without ethical failure finding its way into the warp and woof of the new order.

We are living in a new age, facing problems that are in a large measure peculiar to the new condition. The Christian citizen needs to bear this fact in mind, and as he faces his responsibility recognise the truth that—

“New times demand new measures and new men,
The world advances, and in time outgrows
The laws that in our father’s days were best.
And doubtless after us some purer scheme
Will be shaped out by wiser men than we;
Made wiser by the steady growth of truth.”¹

The air today is heavy with the noise of revolutionary propaganda. If a variety of prescriptions could ensure health, the body politic ought soon to be cured of all its ills. In closing this little volume it may be well to look among these world movements of our time, and see if in any measure they tend toward the ideals of the Kingdom of God, since it is by this test that they must be judged.

The world is still a medley of nations, with varied and often conflicting interests and ideals. The idea of a united Kingdom seems as yet a dream far removed from realisation. But, nevertheless, there has emerged during recent years a consciousness of the solidarity of the race which is moulding the world’s thought and action in a

¹James Russell Lowell

greater degree than at first appears. Think of the varied organisations that today bear the label “international.” The world of labour is being gradually welded into one, irrespective of all national bounds. In the world of intellect the great of all nations are ministering to a cosmopolitan constituency as never before. In the realm of religion, International Councils and Conferences are the order of the day. In politics the world’s rulers are increasingly emphasising the identity of interests, and entering into agreements concerning the things that might lead to friction and interfere with the prosecution of the common good. All this is comparatively new, and it indicates the fact that the world is beginning to realise that God hath “made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.”¹

Turning to the economic outlook, the tendency everywhere is toward concentration and unification. The man in a small way of business is being eliminated. The individual employer in Britain is disappearing in the Limited Liability Company; and in America the process has gone a step farther forward, the Companies being merged into Trusts. This process is not the product of socialistic agitators; it is a part of the economic evolution which ever tends toward the ideals of the Kingdom of God. These things, far more than any street-corner oratory, are carrying the world toward its economic goal. The municipalisation and nationalisation of natural monopolies is going forward apace, and it is not without significance that the country which seems to know least of socialistic agitators—New Zealand—is the one in which the communistic principle most largely prevails.

The new attitude toward charity—the cry against “doles,” and the insistence upon a “right to work”—is another indication of the light of the Divine ideal breaking upon human consciousness. The Christian citizen will do well to ponder all these cries of the hour in the light of the Kingdom of God. Any such study will serve to convince him that Christ is still working in the world, and fulfilling His purposes by means that are beyond our ken. “The kingdom cometh not by observation—lo, it is in the midst of you.”

But all this spells Socialism? Yes, of a kind! And why not? If our conclusion that the political economy of the Kingdom of God will be communistic is correct, there is no reason to fear Socialism *per se*. The point of peril lies in the method by which it may be

¹Acts 17.26

established. If the Socialistic idea is allowed to become a monopoly of the disinherited, then it may portend danger. If those whose circumstances lift them above the line of poverty, and especially if those who profess to follow Christ set themselves in direct and uncompromising antagonism to the gradual socialisation of the world's industry, the result may be as disastrous as the French Revolution, the history of which affords a fruitful study for the thoughtful citizen of our own time. All change involves dislocation and loss to some, but there seems to be no reason why the gradual application of these principles should involve greater loss than that which is entailed in the modifications of commercial and industrial life which are going forward every day. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that it would not be anything like so great.

What, then, ought to be the Christian citizen's attitude toward the Socialistic parties, which are becoming stronger and stronger in the leading nations of the world? Ought he to identify himself with some such organisation, and pledge himself to its propaganda? That does not follow. The ideals and methods of such parties will often make it quite impossible. Indeed, the writer's conviction is that the Christian who commits himself to any political party weakens his Christian influence by so doing. Of course, he must act through a party, but that is a very different matter to being led by a party. The Christian citizen needs to have one centre of authority—Christ; one banner beneath which he fights—the banner of the Cross; one goal toward which all his endeavour tends—The Kingdom of God. Let him be true to that standard, and his influence will be as light and salt, and it will tell upon all parties, and not merely upon the one which it seems to him will best promote the Kingdom which is His quest. It is an easy thing to allow the colours of a party to take the place of the banner of the Christ.

